

# Arts in the Parks

## Spring Mill State Park Property Profile

Website: <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2968.htm>

### Key Messages/Stories:

- Spring Mill State Park is one of Indiana's older parks founded in 1927 and it offers a unique blend of Cultural and Natural History. The campground and the Inn give visitors two options to stay for days and enjoy the attractions here. A park guest can move from the Pioneer Age to the Space Age while throwing in a short hike through old growth forest and finish up with a boat ride into a cave.
- Cultural History of the Area – Virgil I “Gus” Grissom Memorial displays the Gemini III Space Craft the “Molly Brown”. You can watch a movie describing Gus's life from boyhood to his days as one of the original seven astronauts. One can view the many personal items donated by Betty Grissom, Gus's wife.
- The Pioneer Village in Spring Mill has 20 historic buildings 6 of which are original to this little valley. The 3 story Grist Mill Built by the Bullet Brothers in 1817 still stands and corn meal is ground and sold daily during the summer season. Costumed interpreters can be seen doing the daily chores of pioneer life.
- The Hamer Cemetery begun in the early 1800's can be visited year round many of the village residents were interred in this cemetery.
- Natural beauty –Donaldson Woods Nature Preserve is an undisturbed old-growth woods recognized as one of the most impressive stands of original forests in Indiana. Spring Mill is also known for being rich in Karst features such as caves and sinkholes. Several creeks and streams flow through Spring Mill some of which emanate from cave openings. Hamer Cave and Donaldson Caves are two of those openings creating some of Indiana's most scenic cave entrances. Cave River Valley-is located about 15 miles away from Spring Mill and is managed by the park. At 317 acres Cave River Valley is packed with scenic opportunities and two large cave entrances.

### Top Five Things to Do:

- Visit the Pioneer Village and historic grist mill where every hour on the hour 10:00am- 4:00 pm April thru October corn meal is ground.
- Visit the Virgil I “Gus” Grissom Memorial and see the Gemini III Space Craft the “Molly Brown” and watch the movie about Gus's life leading up to becoming an Astronaut and the tragic end to his Career.
- Visit the Lakeview Activity Center, see the reptiles, visit the Ice Age Dig Site, stop by the craft table, play games or watch Nature themed movies.
- Walk the trail through Donaldson Woods beginning at Twin Caves Parking lot then then take the Boat tour through Twin Caves.
- Stay at Historic Spring Mill Inn or just stop by the Mill Stone Dining Room and enjoy a great meal in a hospitable setting.



**Lodging:** Spring Mill Inn has 73 cozy rooms; Spring Mill Campground has 188 Electric sites and 36 primitive

**General visitor profile:** Campers (weekends or weeklong), day use hikers, dog-walkers, bikers, scouts and other groups for volunteer service. Visitors to the Historic Pioneer Village, Lakeview Activity Center, Grissom Memorial, and Twin Caves and during the summer guests to the Swimming pool; school groups and summer camps spring/summer/ fall, Inn guests and those who come to use the conference rooms.

**Potential arts venues:**

- Natural Amphitheater available at the Campground seating for 100 or more if people bring blankets or their own chairs, electricity, screen, under the stars:
- Various shelter houses:
  - Donaldson Shelter can set 70 people, has electricity, bathrooms nearby shade all day
  - Pine Hill Shelter ample parking 45 people, has electricity, pit toilets but near the Nature Center for modern restrooms, Afternoon Sun
  - Sycamore Shelter can seat in the shelter 45 people, field available, ample parking, flush toilet at the shelter, water available at shelter, afternoon sun.
- Nature Center:
  - Program room can seat about 50 Restroom facilities, we have a projector available.
  - Outdoor amphitheater: small stage and seating for at least 50. No lighting available. Electricity available from the building.
- Swimming Pool:
  - 225 car parking lot that can be segregated into performance area.
  - Some outside lighting available.
  - Electricity available from the building.
- Inn:
  - 200 car parking lot
  - Three conference rooms 2-40 people each and 1-200 seating.
  - Back patio with 40 person capacity. Electricity available from the building.

**Visitation in FY2014:** 600,500

**Nearby Communities:** Mitchell, Orleans, Paoli, Bedford, Salem, Bloomington, French Lick, West Baden

Please email questions to [Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov).

